



United States Attorney's Office  
District of Columbia

Ronald C. Machen Jr.  
United States Attorney

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## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

**USAO Public Affairs**

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### **Virginia Man Sentenced to 120 Days in Jail for Committing Hate Crime in Adams Morgan**

WASHINGTON - A 27-year-old Virginia man, Christopher McDonald, has been sentenced to 120 days in jail for an unprovoked assault on a group of gay women in the 2400 block of 18<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Washington, D.C., on September 7, 2009, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced. McDonald received his sentence on Monday, April 5, 2010, before D.C. Superior Court Judge Craig Iscoe on two criminal counts, Bias-Related Threats To Do Bodily Harm and Simple Assault.

McDonald pled guilty to the two charges on February 3, 2010. Because McDonald committed a bias-motivated threat, his maximum penalty on the Threats charge is enhanced by District of Columbia law by 1½ times, which is 270 days' incarceration. Judge Iscoe sentenced McDonald to the maximum on the Threats count, suspending all but 120 days of the sentence, and sentenced him to the maximum 180 days on the Simple Assault charge, suspending all of that sentence. The sentences are consecutive to each other, and McDonald's incarceration will be followed by a two-year period of supervised probation. As part of probation, McDonald must complete fifty (50) hours of community service, seek substance abuse treatment, and complete courses in anger management and sensitivity to issues of sexual orientation.

According to the proffer of facts to which McDonald admitted, on September 7, 2009, McDonald approached a group of women who were eating pizza along the sidewalk of 18<sup>th</sup> Street in Adams Morgan. He confronted the women about their sexual orientation and made derogatory, profanity-laced remarks about their appearance and sexual orientation. With no provocation, McDonald, who was born in Jamaica, pulled out a knife and began advancing

toward one of the women, saying that “if we were in Jamaica I’d shoot you in the face for being gay.” The stunned victims, fearing for their lives, called the police, and McDonald was stopped while attempting to flee. He admitted that he made the threats and brandished the knife based upon his prejudice against the victims’ actual sexual orientation, or what he perceived it to be.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of Metropolitan Police Sergeant Brett Parson and Officers Gregory Frank and Michael Topper, and Detective Anita Maulfair. He also praised the work of Legal Assistants Sabrina Hudgens and Shirrel Jackson, Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas Bednar, and former Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Kelly who handled this case.

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